

**WILLIAMSBURG PLANNING COMMISSION
MINUTES
2005 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WORK SESSION #25
Monday, April 25, 2005**

A work session of the Williamsburg Planning Commission was held on Monday, April 25, 2005, at 3:00 p.m., in Conference Room 3A, Williamsburg Municipal Building, 401 Lafayette Street.

ATTENDANCE AND CALL TO ORDER

Present were Commissioners Young, Pons, Hertzler, McBeth and Smith. Absent were Commissioners Friend and Rose. Also present were Planning Director Nester and Zoning Administrator Murphy.

Mr. Young called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m.

OPEN FORUM

No one spoke at the first Open Forum.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Mr. Nester gave an overview of the five draft chapters of the 2005 Comprehensive Plan that were on the agenda for discussion: Chapter 1 Introduction; Chapter 2 Past Comprehensive Plans; Chapter 3 Goals; Chapter 6 Community Character; and Chapter 7 Land Use Categories.

Chapter 2 Past Comprehensive Plans

Mr. Pons said that he liked the discussion of previous Comprehensive Plans. Mrs. Smith said that it was interesting to read about the recommendations made in past plans. Mr. Hertzler said that he liked the quote in Chapter 1 from the 1953 Plan, which could have been written today:

Planning problems in Williamsburg are far more intricate and difficult than in the usual city of its size. The many thousands of visitors require accommodations and create traffic difficulties. Substantial growth is occurring. Present problems must be solved and future growth accommodated in such a manner that the city may be a completely satisfactory place in which to live and work and so that the notable restoration of the colonial city may be even more enjoyably and profitably viewed by increasing numbers of visitors. The lesson taught by this Restoration is important to the enhancement of national pride in the origins of our nation, thus making the planned development of the entire community of Williamsburg a matter of more than local importance.

Chapter 3 Goals

This chapter was discussed at length.

Mr. Pons questioned what “Work closely with the College” meant in I.C. (page 3-1). He said this statement needs work. Mr. Nester said that this will be fleshed out in Chapter 9.

Mrs. Smith expressed concerns with goals pertaining to the College and to education. Mr. Hertzler questioned whether the City should go its own way on schools, or continue to participate in a joint system with James City County. Mr. Young said that we may want to look at combined services to make sure the City is getting a fair deal. Mrs. McBeth discussed measurements of goals for working with the College.

Mr. Hertzler asked if we should have separate goals for home ownership for multifamily and single-family areas (III.C., page 3-2). Mr. Young said that we need to address existing housing and encourage owner-occupancy, and maybe another bullet point is needed. Mr. Pons suggested the possibility of setting goals for the three focus areas where we have detailed statistics available. Mr. Nester suggested doing the fine tuning in *Chapter 8, Housing and Neighborhoods*, and then returning to the Goals section.

Mr. Hertzler said that vibrant student and owner-occupied neighborhoods are needed. Mrs. McBeth suggested options in the plan to provide some leadership in resolving these issues, and suggested more information on the City property south of Berkeley School. There was an extended discussion about student housing. Mr. Pons suggested preserving the property south of Berkeley Middle School as Public and Semi-Public land use, since there are a lot of unanswered questions about school use.

Mr. Pons said that there were possibilities for mixed-use along Prince George Street, especially near the Imperial Building. Mr. Nester said issues like this will be detailed in *Chapter 10 Commercial and Economic Development*.

Mrs. McBeth said that the City may need to change the rules for the Prince George Parking Garage pertaining to overnight residential parking. She said that Charlottesville allows such parking for downtown residential uses.

Mrs. Smith said there is a need to talk more about the need for recreational facilities throughout the City, rather than just passive parks. She said that this was particularly important because of the anticipated residential growth. Mrs. McBeth said there was a need for more traditional parks.

Mr. Young and Mr. Hertzler suggested adding a goal for dedicated staff for Economic Development. Mr. Young said he is concerned with attracting new business and retaining existing businesses.

Chapter 6, Community Character

Mrs. McBeth pointed out an error in the descriptions of the entrance corridors.

Chapter 7, Land Use Categories

There were no comments on this draft chapter.

Draft Land Use Map

Mr. Nester reviewed a very rough draft of the 2005 land use map, pointing out the changes that needed to be made to reflect the land use changes on which Commission had reached a consensus.

FUTURE WORK SESSION DATES

The Commission decided on the following dates for future work sessions on the Plan:

Monday, May 9 Work Session, 7:00 p.m. Municipal Building: Presentation from the HRPDC on the Population and Economy reports that they have prepared for the Update.

Monday, May 23 Work Session, 3:00 p.m., Municipal Building: Chapter 8 Neighborhoods and Housing.

Wednesday, June 8 Work Session, 6:30 p.m., Municipal Building: Chapter 9 Institutions and Chapter 10 Commercial and Economic Development.

Monday, June 27 Work Session, 3:00 p.m., Municipal Building: Chapter 11 Infrastructure and Chapter 12 Implementation.

OPEN FORUM

Darr Barshis, 17 Forest Hills Drive, said that he was interested in rental housing issues, and one of the problems is the number of non-conforming uses throughout the City. He said that they will not change unless there is encouragement by the City to change. He said that the most suitable location for student housing is the hospital site, and also urged consideration of Monticello Shopping Center for student-oriented commercial uses. He concluded by saying that it was a good idea for City officials to meet with the new College President.

The meeting adjourned at 5:15 p.m.

Jesse Young, Chairman
Williamsburg Planning Commission